

<b>SUBJECT: Inclusion and Diversity Policy</b>	<b>CATEGORY:</b> HR
	<b>ORIGINAL DATE:</b> November 16, 2011
	<b>REVIEWED DATE:</b> March 29, 2017
	<b>REVISED DATE:</b> March 29, 2017

**I. POLICY:**

~~—The Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center recognizes, respects, promotes and celebrates the value of cultural diversity and will adopt and implement inclusive policies and strategies which advance cultural diversity as a positive force within the organization. We embrace and celebrate our diversity through inclusion to create a culture that engages all employees, encourages collaboration, respect and fairness. its talented and diverse workforce as a key competitive advantage. The success of the services we offer is a reflection of the quality and skill of our people. We recognize that each employee brings their own unique capabilities, experiences and characteristics to their work. Our diversity encompasses differences in ethnicity, national origin, gender, language, age, sexual orientation, religion, abilities, experience, socio-economic status, and education. Embracing and celebrating our diversity through inclusion helps to create a culture that connects each employee to the organization, encourages collaboration, respect and fairness so that all individuals are able to participate and contribute to their full potential.~~

**Definitions:**

**Diversity**

~~Those capabilities, experiences and different characteristics that make each one of us unique.~~

**Inclusion**

~~Inclusion is a state of being valued, respected and supported. Creating an environment that engages all employees and encourages them to work at their full potential, deliver their best work and serve the community effectively.~~

**Cultural Awareness**

~~Becoming aware of the values, beliefs and communication styles of ourselves and others to A positive and supportive environment is the foundation on which we build continued relationships with our patients, our partners, our coworkers, and communities.~~

The Health Department regularly monitors community demographics and health outcomes to ensure our strategic planning and outreach activities are meeting the needs of our community. Our leaders, supervisors, care givers and policy makers are both culturally competent and culturally sensitive. By inwardly reflecting the perspectives of our diverse community at all levels, we demonstrate that we truly value the community we serve.

## CORPORATE POLICY

### A. Responsibility to Provide Culturally Competent Care to an Ethnically Diverse Patient/Client Population

The Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center supports and requires that patient care, client care and overall customer service be provided in a culturally competent ~~and ethnically sensitive~~ manner. Communication and interactions with all customers of the Health Department should be delivered in a culturally sensitive manner.

~~Knowledge and skills related to cultural diversity~~Cultural awareness can strengthen and broaden health care delivery systems by helping providers and staff respond appropriately when navigating cultural differences. It is important to understand other cultures because they can provide examples of a range of alternatives in services, delivery systems, conceptualization of illness, and treatment modalities. ~~Culturally diverse groups often utilize traditional health care providers, identified by and respected within the group.~~ Concepts of illness, health, wellness and treatment modalities are part of the total cultural belief system. Delivering culturally competent services can help address barriers and improve patient and client care.

Becoming culturally competent is an ongoing educational process. The Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center will make relevant information accessible to employees in an effort to enhance their understanding of the following:

- How cultural groups:
  - understand life processes;
  - define health and illness;
- What cultural groups:
  - do to maintain wellness believe to be the causes of illness;
- How healers cure and care for members of cultural groups
- How the cultural background of the employee influences the way in which care is delivered.

### B. ~~It is important for employees to consider specific cultural factors impacting individuals.~~ Inclusion and Diversity Council

The Health Department's commitment to inclusion and diversity is represented by the Inclusion and Diversity Council. This group of supervisory and non-supervisory employees represent all Service Areas. The cooperation and support of all employees and supervisors in the inclusion and diversity efforts is essential to assuring the success of any initiatives. Actions of the Inclusion and Diversity Council are governed by the established bylaws.

The mission for the Inclusion and Diversity Council is: To inspire cultural diversity, inclusion and competency through equal opportunity, respect, and the understanding of staff, clients and community.

### C. Inclusion and Diversity Subcommittees:

## CORPORATE POLICY

The Council may form standing sub-committees or teams to accomplish special projects and/or functions that further the goals and objectives of the Inclusion and Diversity Council. The Inclusion and Diversity Council Chair shall have the authority to appoint Team Leaders when the sub-committee is formed. Team Leaders may solicit members or they may be appointed by the Diversity Council Chair to assist in accomplishing projects.

1. Policy subcommittee

The role of this subcommittee is to identify opportunities for the agency to advance diversity awareness and inclusion processes by reviewing current internal policies and procedures that may need to be enhanced or developed. Communications will be sent out notifying employees of opportunities to participate in our subcommittee, as needed.

2. Training subcommittee

Training Committee members are responsible for developing short experiential exercises, and other training resources that could be used by supervisors or employees to increase awareness of inclusion and diversity in the workplace and community.

3. Membership subcommittee

The Membership subcommittee will be responsible for soliciting new members and fielding questions from potential members. The Liaison will also be responsible for guiding potential members through the membership application process and ensure they are provided with the By-Laws. In addition, the Liaison is responsible for keeping a current member list.

4. Communication subcommittee

The role of this subcommittee is to identify, incorporate and maintain inclusion and diversity messages into agency communications (i.e. employee intranet and external websites, and newsletters).

D. Responsibility of Employees and Supervisors

The Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center is committed to creating an environment that encourages employees to develop and perform at their maximum potential and to more effectively work with clients, patients and employees.

We are tolerant, understanding, and inclusive of individuals and families of all races, religions, ages, countries of national origin, ethnicities, genders, abilities, and sexual orientations and income levels. Our agency believes that by providing diversity awareness and other training opportunities to employees, they will have a better understanding of what constitutes unethical conduct, negative treatment based on differences, and take responsibility for safeguarding our agency's culture.

**II. SCOPE:**

All Lake County Health Department and Community Health Center employees

**III. PROCEDURE: NONE**

**IV. REFERENCES: NONE**

**V. AUTHORS/REVIEWERS:**

Designated Review Team, Corporate Policies and Procedures Committee, Executive Team, and Lake County Board of Health Personnel Committee

**VI. APPROVALS:**

Lake County Board of Health President

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_